

Official Zoning Code Interpretation



Department of City Planning | 1 Exchange Plaza, Suite 300 | Raleigh, NC 27601 | 919-996-2626

Requested Interpretation		Case Number
<p>How is the wall height measured when the side roof form is not a triangular shaped gable? The UDO states: <i>A side-gabled roof structure may extend above the side setback plane on each side of the building, for a total length of not more than 30 feet (A) on each side, measured from the front wall plane.</i></p> <p>The house being constructed at 3014 Churchill Road does not have a side-gabled roof. The side wall on BOTH sides of the house extends straight up and exceeds 31 feet in height. There is no triangular form that would qualify this roof as a gable. Please see attached photos and side elevation.</p> <p>Also Code Interpretation UI-06-17 states that: The front wall plane is on the exterior of the house and does not make an allowance for an architectural feature that attempts to reduce the visual impact of length of the wall plane.</p>		UI-13-17
Site Address/PIN: 3014 Churchill Street		
Date Submitted: August 14, 2017	Date Issued: October 19, 2017	Code Sections Affected: 2.2.7.D

STAFF ANALYSIS

The applicant has asked about the method for measurement for a specific standard contained within the UDO. The applicant cites a specific address as an example and has included pictures of a structure that is currently under construction. The UDO contains standards for residential infill construction. These standards do not apply to all residential development in the city; rather, a set of application criteria are listed in section 2.2.7.B. The residential infill standards include regulations for maximum street setback, height and side wall length. The regulation cited by the applicant is included in section 2.2.7.D, Height.

The regulations in section 2.2.7.D largely regulate the height of a side wall when a structure is constructed at the minimum setback line. The section includes certain exceptions to this side wall height limit, including dormer windows and side gable roofs. The regulations allow these elements to project above the maximum side wall height, provided certain standards are met. These standards specify the maximum width of the dormer or gable roof above the maximum height limit established in subsection D.1.

The UDO permits a gable to extend above the maximum wall plane, provided that the gable is no more than 30 feet in width. Additionally, dormer windows may also protrude above the maximum wall height plane provided the dormers are no more than 15 feet in width. The language is not specific to the shape of the gable or dormer window. The UDO does include diagrams that illustrate the regulations; however, these diagrams are only illustrative in nature, pursuant to section 12.1.2.

STAFF INTERPRETATION

While the UDO contains standards related to side wall height, there is no particular shape required for a form to be classified as a gable. The dictionary definition of the term "gable" refers to a downward sloping roof that emanates from a central ridge. In determining compliance with the regulations, staff would identify the area considered to be the gable and apply the regulations in section 2.2.7.D. The gable is most commonly produced when a rafter joins the roof ridge to the wall plate. A traditional form can be triangular in shape; although other shapes are not precluded. The UDO regulations require the infill-qualified sidewall height be 22 feet or less. This wall height is measured from average grade at the side wall to the bottom of the gable form. UI-6-17, issued on May 6, 2017, contains the official interpretation for measurement of a gable feature. The UDO permits certain elements to extend above the maximum wall height measurement – namely, a side-gabled roof structure or dormer. The regulation in section 2.2.7.D permits these encroachments, provided that the width of the encroaching element is not more than 30 feet in width. The approved plans for the property at 3014 Churchill Street show an area below the roof ridge that appears to be similar in nature to gable and dormer, both of which are shown on the plans as less than 30 feet in width.

SIGNATORY

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